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Testimony in support of:

R.B. 6157 AN ACT CONCERNING STATE FORESTRY PROGRAMS

Submitted By: Joan Nichols, Government Relations Specialist, Connecticut Farm Bureau Association

The following testimony is submitted on behalf of the Connecticut Farm Bureau, a statewide nonprofit membership organization of over 5,000 families dedicated to farmers and the future of Connecticut agriculture.

Senator Edward Meyer, Representative Richard Roy and members of the Environment Committee:

R.B. 6157 establishes a separate, non-lapsing account within the General Fund to be known as the "timber harvesting revolving account". Funds deposited into this account from state timber sales may be utilized to update and develop forest management plans and other administrative expenses necessary to maintain the health of Connecticut's state forests. Well managed forests derive more in income and other non-monetary benefits than the cost to maintain those forests. The establishment of this fund would be a positive first step to managing Connecticut's state forest lands program on a sustainable basis.

According to a 2010 UCONN study, sales of Connecticut forest products accounted for approximately \$131.5 million dollars. Managed forests contribute to the state's economy, job growth and the quality of our environment. They pay for themselves not only in income derived from state timber sales but they also provide clean air, open space, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunity. Connecticut Farm Bureau Association urges your support of R.B. 6157. It is time the legislature gave something back to our state forest lands after all they given the state of Connecticut for the past one hundred years.